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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/824,577	04/14/2004	Chia-Chen Liu	252011-2230	6533

47390 7590 09/15/2006

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EXAMINER

PERKINS, PAMELA E

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2822

DATE MAILED: 09/15/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/824,577

Applicant(s)

LIU ET AL.

Examiner

Pamela E. Perkins

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 June 2006.
2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-19, 26 and 27 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-19, 26 and 27 is/are rejected.
7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

This office action is in response to the filing of the request for reconsideration on 25 June 2006. Claims 1-19, 26 and 27 are pending; claims 20-25 have been previously cancelled.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-19, 26 and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson (6,525,953) in view of Chakrabarti et al. (5,747,135).

Referring to claims 1, 14, 26 and 27, Johnson discloses a method of fabricating a semiconductor memory device where a first conductive layer (114), a first type doped semiconductor layer (130), a first dielectric layer (131), and a second type doped semiconductor layer (132) are sequentially formed on a substrate (100); patterning the second type doped semiconductor layer (132), the first dielectric layer (131), the first type doped semiconductor layer (130), and the conductive layer (114) along the first direction, thereby turning the conductive layer into a first conductive line; patterning the second type doped semiconductor layer (132), the first dielectric layer (131), and the first type doped semiconductor layer (130) into a memory cell; depositing a second dielectric layer (not shown) overlying the substrate (100); planarizing the second

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dielectric layer to expose the memory cell; and forming a second conductive line (123) overlying the second dielectric layer, running generally perpendicular to the first conductive line (Fig. 7; col. 8, line 36 thru col. 9, line 22; col. 11, lines 18-43).

Johnson does not disclose employing oxygen plasma sputtering to clean the substrate before deposition of a layer.

Chakrabarti et al. disclose a method of fabricating a semiconductor memory device where a layer (16) is formed over a substrate (12), wherein oxygen plasma sputtering is employed to clean the substrate before deposition of the layer (col. 3, lines 21-37).

Since Johnson and Chakrabarti et al. are both from the same field of endeavor, a method of fabricating a semiconductor memory device, the purpose disclosed by Chakrabarti et al. would have been recognized in the pertinent art of Johnson. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Johnson by employing oxygen plasma sputtering to clean the substrate before deposition of a layer as taught by Chakrabarti et al. to contaminants from the substrate (col. 3, lines 37-43).

Referring to claim 2 and 14, Johnson discloses the first type doped semiconductor layer as a p⁺-type doped silicon layer (col. 11, lines 18-43).

Referring to claims 3 and 14, Johnson discloses the first conductive layer comprising a stack of TiN/TiSi₂/p⁺-type doped silicon layers (col. 8, lines 45-53).

Referring to claims 4 and 14, Johnson discloses the first conductive line as a word line (Fig. 1; col. 4, lines 60-63).

Referring to claims 5 and 15, Johnson discloses the formation of the first dielectric layer comprises rapid thermal oxidation of silicon (col. 8, lines 61-67).

Referring to claims 6 and 14, Johnson discloses the second type doped silicon layer is n-type doped silicon layer (col. 11, lines 18-43).

Referring to claims 7 and 14, Johnson discloses the memory cell comprises a stack of p+-type doped silicon/first dielectric/n-type doped silicon layers (Fig. 7; col. 11, lines 18-43).

Referring to claims 12 and 14, Johnson discloses the second conductive layer comprises a stack of n+-type doped silicon/TiN/TiS₂/n+-type doped silicon/n-type doped silicon layers (Fig. 7; col. 11, lines 18-43).

Referring to claims 13 and 14, Johnson disclose the second conductive line as a bit line (Fig. 1; col. 4, lines 60-63).

Referring to claims 8-11 and 16-19, Chakrabarti et al. do not disclose a flow rate between 200 and 400sccm, a temperature between 225 and 275 °C and power between 1000 and 1500W. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time invention was made to perform oxygen plasma cleaning at a flow rate between 200 and 400sccm, a temperature between 225 and 275 °C and power between 1000 and 1500W disclosed in the claimed invention, since it has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering the optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art. *In re Aller*, 105 USPQ 233 (CCPA 1955).

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 25 June 2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. As stated above, Johnson in view of Chakrabarti et al. disclose the method of fabricating a semiconductor memory device as described in independent claims 1 and 14.

In response to the applicant's arguments, the applicant argues prior art does not teach depositing a second dielectric layer overlying the substrate, wherein oxygen plasma sputtering is employed to clean the substrate before deposition. However, Johnson discloses the claimed invention, including a second dielectric layer, except for the oxygen plasma sputtering employed to clean the substrate. The examiner is relying of the Chakrabarti et al. reference to teach oxygen plasma sputtering employed to clean the substrate. Cleaning a substrate after a patterning step is standard practice in the semiconductor field to remove residue. Also, dielectric layers are inherently formed between metal layers and substrate to prevent shortages.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Lee (6,657,278) disclose sequentially forming a first conductive layer, a first type doped semiconductor layer, a first dielectric layer, a second type doped semiconductor layer on the substrate; patterning the second type doped semiconductor layer, the first dielectric layer, the first type doped semiconductor layer, and the conductive layer along the first direction, thereby turning the conductive layer

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into a first conductive line; patterning the second type doped semiconductor layer, the first dielectric layer, and the first type doped semiconductor layer into a memory cell; depositing a second dielectric layer overlying the substrate; planarizing the second dielectric layer to expose the memory cell; and forming a second conductive line overlying the second dielectric layer, running generally orthogonal to the first conductive line.

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

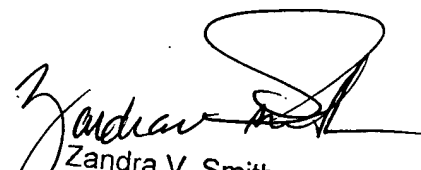
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Pamela E. Perkins whose telephone number is (571) 272-1840. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday thru Friday, 8:30am to 5:00pm.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Zandra Smith can be reached on (571) 272-2429. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

PEP
11 September 2006


Zandra V. Smith
Supervisory Patent Examiner
12 Sept. 2006